

## Behavioural gap analysis

Information sheet from Seven steps > Step 7 > Further tools



### What is a behavioural gap analysis?

A behavioural gap analysis is a way of monitoring the gap between where you are and where you want to be in relation to unsafe and safe working practices. In practice this means observing the behaviours of workers on your site, and comparing these with the standard of behaviour that you aspire to.

### Why should I do a behavioural gap analysis?

You should use behavioural gap analysis to provide answers to questions such as:

- I notice that one trade is having more accidents or near misses than the others. Why?
- My site managers tell me certain sites and sections are much less likely to erect tower scaffolds safely. Why?

A behavioural gap analysis will help you to assess how vulnerable your workers are to potential risks and hazards. Once you understand the problem, you can work out how to put things right.

### How do I do a behavioural gap analysis?

There are different ways you can carry out a behavioural gap analysis. You need to decide what is going to work for you. The first step will almost certainly be to define, adopt or develop a relevant behavioural standard.

Some businesses do a checklist to identify the health and safety standard that they are aiming for, and then to identify whether workers are operating to that standard (see Table 1).

**Table 1 – Example checklist items**

Standard	Yes	No	Part
Are walkways clear and free from obstruction?			
Are work areas as clear as possible of unnecessary materials and waste?			

Other businesses may decide to put more detail into their behavioural gap analysis as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Example of detailed checklist items**

Standard Required	What we do at present	Actions needed to be taken	Comments/Notes
All walkways to be clear and free from obstruction.	Walkways are obstructed by materials and waste.	Ensure designated storage areas are created for materials. Walkways to be kept clear. Waste needs to be disposed of in designated areas	

See the *Example site observation checklist*, in Step 7 > Further Tools, for a more detailed example. This covers working at height, slips and manual handling.

Depending on the project and the size of the site you are working on you can develop a series of standards for safe working behaviours.



### **When I have done a behavioural gap analysis how can I use the information to encourage safe working practices?**

You can use the information from your gap analysis:

- To set objectives with your workers and develop an action plan that will involve everyone working more safely and engaging in less risky behaviours on site. See Step 6 of this toolkit for guidance on how to do this.
- To focus training, safety briefings and tool box talks, to sections or areas of work where the risk appears to be greater

For further information see [www.hse.gov.uk/construction](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction)

**The Leadership and Worker Involvement toolkit is aimed particularly at small and medium sized businesses and is designed to help improve your health and safety and bring additional benefits to your business performance and productivity.**